

REMARKS

Claims 2-5 remain pending in this application. No claims have been canceled or added.

Interview

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner and Examiner's supervisor for conducting a telephone interview with the undersigned on October 16, 2009. It was agreed during the interview that independent claim 5 was patentable over the cited art. The Examiners requested that a terminal disclaimer be filed in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,031,677. The following includes the substance of that which was discussed during the interview.

Terminal Disclaimer

A terminal disclaimer is submitted herewith as requested by the Examiners in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,031,677 in order to avoid a potential double patenting rejection of the claims and to speed prosecution of this application. The filing of the terminal disclaimer should not be considered an admission as to the propriety of any such potential double patenting rejection.

35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 2-5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Takahashi (U.S. Patent No. 6,295,099). These rejections are traversed as follows.

Claims 2-5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §§102(e) as being anticipated by Takahashi (U.S. Patent No. 6,295,099).

As explained during the interview, independent claim 5 is directed to an information management apparatus for managing recorded information. The information management apparatus includes a receiver which receives main information, a recorder which records the main information on a recording medium, and a main information reproducer which reproduces the main information on the recording medium. The information management apparatus has a reproduction management means for managing the main information reproducer, wherein the reproduction management means has a reproduction disabling means for disabling operation of the main information reproducer. Furthermore, the reproduction means has decision means for deciding whether the reproduction disabling function of the reproduction disabling means is normal, and a reproduction start refusing means for refusing a reproduction start command requesting start of an operation for reproducing the main information by the main information reproducer, when the decision means decides that the reproduction disabling function of the reproduction disabling means is abnormal.

Takahashi fails to disclose or suggest a reproduction management means provided with a reproduction disabling means for disabling operation of a main information reproducer, wherein a reproduction disabling means includes decision means for deciding whether a reproduction disabling function of the reproduction disabling means is normal, and a reproduction start refusing means for refusing a reproduction start command requesting start of an operation for reproducing a main information by a main information reproducer, when the decision means decides that the reproduction disabling function of the reproduction disabling means is abnormal.

The substantive portion of the Examiner's Takahashi citations fail to disclose any features or methods which correspond to reproduction management means, decision means, or reproduction start refusing means. The present claims recite refusing a reproduction start command when a reproduction disabling function is decided to be abnormal. The Takahashi reference describes searching a memory space storing video and audio data in solid-state memory.

As mentioned in the Office Action, Takahashi discloses an erase flag provided in a main memory. The erase flag indicates that the stored data which corresponds with the flag is inaccessible thereby normal reproduction of the stored data is disabled (See col. 4, lines 39-42). In Takahashi, stored data is set to a logically erased state by the erase flag prior to physical deletion of the data, however there is no teaching that a decision is made regarding whether the reproduction disabling function of the reproduction disabling means is normal. Accordingly, the erase flag is

not equivalent to the reproduction management means having decision means for deciding whether the reproduction disabling function of the reproduction disabling means is normal, as recited in claim 5.

Furthermore, in the Office Action, Takahashi is said to disclose that the reproduction disabling means includes a reproduction start refusing means for refusing a reproduction start command requesting start of an operation for reproducing said main information by said main information reproducer. In Takahashi, when a reproducing operation is specified, a memory controller controls memory addresses and reading/writing of the memory so that stored data (video, audio, and identification information) may be read from the memory (See col. 4, lines 48-62). There is no teaching or suggestion in Takahashi that a reproducing operation is refused, instead Takahashi discloses that in response to a reproducing operation the stored data of the memory will be read (See col. 4, lines 48-62). Accordingly, the reproducing operation of Takahashi does not correspond to the reproduction start refusing means for refusing a reproduction start command requesting the start of an operation for reproducing the main information by the information reporter as set forth in claim 5.

Still further, in the Office Action, the reproduction start refusing means refusing a reproduction start command when the decision means decides that the reproduction disabling function of the reproduction disabling means is abnormal is rejected by resort to Takahashi. However, in Takahashi, a search area of a memory

space is disclosed for reproducing image data. Specifically, Takahashi discloses determining a leading address, A_i, and another predetermined address forming a loop, where the loop is repeatedly searched/read (See col. 6 line 66 to col. 7, line 14). Takahashi fails to disclose refusing a reproduction start command when the decision means decides that the reproduction disabling function of the reproduction disabling means is abnormal, as set forth in claim 5.

As such, it is submitted that all of the pending claims patentably define the present invention over the cited art.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

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Respectfully submitted,

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